

I oppose the proposed increase to fixed electricity charges under EPR0097.

Increasing the fixed portion of bills will unfairly penalise households that use less electricity and those who have invested in rooftop solar power generation and storage batteries.

I have made a conscious decision to invest just over \$20,000 in high quality solar panels, inverter and battery storage at my residence over the last 12 months.

My reasons for making this investment are:

- Environmental – by being able to cost effectively utilise solar power and store it, I wish contribute to the long-term health and wellbeing of this planet and it's inhabitants by reducing my dependence on fossil fuels to generate electrical energy.
- Reduction in supply and consumption charges for the provision of electrical energy by using solar energy.
- Having access to electrical energy when grid-based power is unavailable.
 - I live in an area where the grid-based power supply is unreliable. Outages for 30mins -3 hours are not uncommon.
 - It also an area that has flooded twice within the last 5 years. On the first occasion, there was no grid power available for 10 days. On the second occasion, there was no grid power available for 4 days.
 - The sewerage system my local council has installed relies on grid power for its operation. No grid power = no sewerage.
- My residential water supply is via a water tank and an electrically powered water pump.
 - No power = no water for any purpose (drinking, cooking, toilet flushing etc).
 - I have invested in a solar battery system to overcome the unreliability of the grid-based power system
- Minimise financial exposure to rising cost of power consumption by utilising & storing solar energy.

I have reduced my demand on the grid and made a significant private investment to support Australia's clean energy transition. I should not be worse off because of it.

Higher fixed charges reduce the financial benefit of saving energy. Why should I, or any other member of the community, make any further investment in developing a solar power generation and storage capability if the business case is not workable or, is of such a long duration, that it becomes fraught with risk due to factors I cannot control or influence.

Over time, at a local consumer level, I can foresee this will risk slow the growth of distributed clean energy that supports the grid, especially during daytime peaks.

Small and low-use households will be hit hardest. A pricing structure that shifts more costs into fixed charges disproportionately affects pensioners, renters, apartment dwellers and energy-conscious families.

There is also a serious long-term risk. If fixed charges continue to rise, households who can afford solar, batteries and backup systems will increasingly consider leaving the grid altogether. That would shrink the customer base that pays for shared network costs, pushing

prices even higher for those who cannot afford to disconnect. This creates a two-tier system and undermines the idea of electricity as an essential service.

Electricity networks are natural monopolies and a critical public good. I question whether privatisation has delivered lower prices or better outcomes. Even the ACCC has raised concerns about how privatised electricity has failed consumers and the broader economy. Pricing reforms should strengthen trust in the system, not weaken it.

At a time when large-scale renewable and transmission projects face delays, locally generated energy in cities and towns is more important than ever. Rooftop solar is not marginal — it is a core part of Australia’s electricity supply. Pricing reforms should encourage participation, not discourage it.

I urge the AEMC to protect **fair usage-based pricing** and maintain strong incentives for households to reduce demand and invest in clean energy.

Please reject changes that increase fixed charges at the expense of equity, efficiency and long-term grid stability.

Regards,

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